



NEWS RELEASE

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Junction City Families Move Into New USDA-Financed Homes

53 New Homes Constructed through Agency's Mutual Self-Help Housing Program

Junction City, KS – USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks and Junction City officials welcomed seven more local families into their new homes during dedication ceremonies held on Saturday. The seven families are the latest participants to successfully construct their own homes under USDA's funded *Mutual Self-Help Housing Program*. Junction City's participation in the Agency's *Mutual Self-Help Housing Program* has been one of the cornerstones of USDA's historic Fort Riley Regional Initiative which was launched in June 2008 to support the Post's personnel expansion under BRAC.

"Increasing the availability of affordable housing to support important economic development in Junction City and the housing priorities of the Fort Riley Command has been a vital goal of USDA and the community over the past several years. Junction City's participation in USDA housing programs has greatly assisted the community in their efforts to meet this goal, and the City's leaders should be commended for their vision to reinvest in their community. Supporting affordable homeownership opportunities is an important first step to allow income-eligible families the chance to enjoy real personal economic prosperity, along with supporting local economic opportunities," commented State Director Banks.

Fifty-three new homes, representing over \$3.7 million in homeownership loans provided by USDA, have been constructed by families in Junction City who have participated in this Agency housing program. The ceremony also included an announcement that additional homes will be constructed under the Program. Junction City's participation in USDA's *Mutual Self-Help Housing Program* has been a key component of the Agency's successful 'USDA - Fort Riley Regional Initiative', which has resulted in over \$48.8 million in financing for affordable homeownership opportunities for area individuals and families in the region, including over \$16.6 million in financing for Geary County alone.

Dan Pfizenmaier, Junction City Self-Help Housing Manager said, "I am continually amazed on how much this program helps people get a break in life, get on their feet and have a better life. I am so proud of them. We are especially impressed with the families' willingness to do whatever it takes to get these homes built. All of them have had to learn new skills, but they have banded together in heart and soul to finish all the homes and to provide a quality product. The construction process can sometimes be long and many times the work is more difficult than they thought it would be, but they didn't quit. The Self Help families continue to support each other throughout the building process and will become good neighbors. In addition to the fine homes that have been built, they have also built strong personal bonds and will be friends for a long time."

Additional homes are to be completed through this program by September 2009. Self-Help Housing of Junction City serves as one of USDA Rural Development's technical assistance partners across the state for the *Mutual Self-Help Housing Program*. Junction City has administered this USDA program since July 2002, helping to provide increased affordable housing opportunities to many very low to moderate income residents.

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USDA also recognized Junction City Manager Rod Barnes for his leadership in supporting affordable housing opportunities for the community through the City's use of the Agency's programs. USDA recognized the City and its elected leadership in June 2008 for the same honor.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for rural Americans. As a venture capital entity, USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. Since 2001, USDA Rural Development has delivered over \$1.5 billion for Kansas covering all Agency programs, supporting well over \$7 billion in future economic development for the Sunflower State.

USDA Rural Development – *Committed to the future of rural communities*

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